

Rep. Peter Welch on Wednesday was joined by boaters and sportsmen at a Malletts Bay marina to highlight his efforts to rein in federal subsidies to the ethanol industry that cost taxpayers nearly \$6 billion a year, drive up food prices and cause damage to small engines used in boats, motorcycles and lawnmowers. Welch was first alerted to the harmful effects of ethanol on small engines at a county fair in Highgate.

The ethanol industry benefits from three taxpayer subsidies: a \$.045 per gallon tax credit, a protective import tariff of \$0.54 per gallon and a renewable energy fuel mandate, which requires the blending of ethanol and other biodiesel in U.S. transportation fuel. These subsidies remain in place despite a General Accountability Office (GAO) report that questioned the need to subsidize this mature industry.

"It simply doesn't make sense for taxpayers to continue subsidizing a mature and profitable industry, especially at a time when Congressional leaders are proposing drastic cuts in fuel assistance, student loans, high speed rail, and Medicare," Welch said. "I'm also hearing from Vermonters that ethanol is damaging the engines to boats, chainsaws and lawnmowers. It is high time we end this unnecessary subsidy."

Welch has taken a number of actions to rein in ethanol subsidies. He is a co-sponsor of the Repeal Ethanol Subsidies Today Act (H.R. 1188), which would terminate the subsidies and has written to House Speaker John Boehner urging him to allow a floor vote on repealing the subsidies. Finally, during debate on the fiscal year 2011 Continuing Resolution, Welch voted to overturn the EPA's regulation that increased the allowable amount of ethanol in gasoline from 10 to 15 percent.

To watch video of Welch's remarks at today's news conference, [CLICK HERE](#) .